

## COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM PRACTICAL TRAINING GUIDELINES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

As part of your educational experience at Pace University, you may be eligible for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) through the Co-op Education Internship Program. You must adhere to the below guidelines to ensure compliance with the rules and regulations set forth by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). If you have any questions about your eligibility and/or visa status, please visit the International Students and Scholars Office (ISS). For more information, go to: [www.pace.edu/international](http://www.pace.edu/international).

### ELIGIBILITY

- International students on an F-1 visa must be enrolled full-time for **one full academic year\*** (two consecutive academic semesters) before they are eligible for CPT.
- All students seeking an internship must first enroll in Career Services' INSPIRE (International Student Professional Readiness Education) Program and attend mandatory and recommended online and in person workshops. Please login to **Blackboard: My Organization-INSPIRE** to get started!
- One of the online workshops is Career Services CPT Guidelines Workshop; after you view this online, your information will be submitted to the University's ISS Designated School Official (DSO), who will determine student off-campus employment eligibility based on the length of time they have been in lawful F-1 status.
- Students' off-campus eligibility date will be saved on students' record
- Students will be informed by ISS about their *eligibility* date and the next steps as follows:
  - (1) Read and e-sign the acknowledgement form
  - (2) Attend a mandatory ISS-Career Services online CPT workshop (**different than Career Services' CPT workshop**)
  - (3) Read the learning materials (CPT guidance)
  - (4) Meet with a Career Counselor to have the resume approved and discuss job search strategies.
- Upon completion of these four steps, students may then begin to apply to internships online via Handshake, Career Services' recruiting portal.
- In addition, students must be fully matriculated in a degree program.
  - Undergraduate students must be enrolled in 12 credits and maintain a minimum GPA of 2.5.
  - Graduate and PhD students must be enrolled in 9 credits and maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0.
- **Eligible students may intern up to 20 hours per week (part-time) during the academic year and up to 40 hours per week (full-time) over summer and winter break in a position that is related to the student's major area of study.**
- Eligible students must commit to staying in the internship for a minimum of 12 weeks during the Spring or Fall term and 8 weeks over summer break.

NOTE: Students working on-campus in a Graduate Assistantship position for 20 hours a week **cannot** work during the academic year in an off-campus internship, but may do so during the summer. However, those who have a 10-hour a week Graduate Assistantship may participate in a 10-hour a week internship but must submit proof from employer on company letterhead that the internship will not exceed 10 hours a week. Graduate Assistantship indicating 10-hour weekly assignment must be submitted along with internship/employment offer.

\*Exceptions to the one academic year requirement are provided for students enrolled in graduate studies that require immediate participation in CPT (required internship as integral part of the curriculum).

### AUTHORIZATION

*Prior to beginning an internship:*

- Students who are offered and want to accept an internship opportunity (paid\* or unpaid) must first meet with their Career Counselor to process the required **Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Confirmation Form**.
- Career Counselor will forward a CPT Confirmation Form to ISS, who will then record the job/internship in SEVIS and issue a new **Form I-20**, which serves as the students' official employment authorization. It is the students' responsibility to pick up

the new Form I-20 from ISS and bring to their internship supervisor. Students **cannot** begin work until they have their new Form I-20 and have shown it to their supervisor.

- Students should allow ISS 3-5 business days to process and issue the new Form I-20.
- Students will only be authorized for **one semester** (or school break) at a time. If a student plans on continuing their internship into the next semester or plans on securing a new internship, they must request from Coop a new **Curricular Practical Training Confirmation Form** and obtain a new **Form I-20**.
  - The new Form I-20 must be issued prior to the expiration date of the existing authorization.
  - In accordance with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Regulations, ISS is not allowed to backdate an I-20 in the event that a student did not process a Form I-20 before starting or continuing an internship.
  - **Students who fail to obtain proper authorization and who begin an internship without an updated Form I-20 (even if continuing in an internship) will be in violation of their visa status and we will inform the employer.**

\*In order to work in a **paid internship** and pay taxes students will need a **Social Security Number**. Students must visit ISS for information on obtaining a Social Security card from the Social Security Administration office. Please inform your Career Counselor if you need to obtain a SS card.

### **FINDING AN INTERNSHIP**

Students may apply for internships outside of Handshake. Regardless of where or how a student finds an internship, it must (1) **be directly related to their major field of study** and (2) **meet all CPT eligibility requirements**. A Career Counselor will determine if an internship is study-related and meets the requirements.

In order for the Career Counselor to approve the placement, the employer must complete the **Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Employment Verification** form in order to provide the following information:

- Name and address of the organization
- Position title and responsibilities
- Signature, name, phone number, and email of internship supervisor
- Number of hours the student will be interning per week as well as the length of assignment
- Start date and end date (if possible)
- Compensation (e.g., hourly wage/stipend) (if applicable)

The form **MUST** be completed by the employer and sent back to the counselor listed on the form via email.

Students **cannot** formally accept an internship until they meet with their career counselor.

To be clear: Students **MUST** obtain a new Form I-20 **BEFORE** beginning **ANY** internship.

As mentioned above, students who fail to obtain proper authorization and who begin an internship without an updated Form I-20 (even if continuing in an internship) will be in violation of their visa status, will have to meet with the Director of ISS to discuss next steps and Career Services will inform the employer.

### **IN CONCLUSION**

Our goal is to support you throughout your internship experience. To make the most of your internship, stay in touch with your career counselor, keep your work authorization up-to-date and notify us if there are any changes in your internship assignment. Should you have any questions about your eligibility for the off-campus practical training while you are in lawful student visa status, or have any concerns about your authorization, please visit ISS and/or schedule an appointment with the International Student Advisor before you begin any internship.